

## Introduction to Program Evaluation for Comprehensive Tobacco Control Programs for Comprehensive Tobacco Control Programs-CDC

### Objectives

What does your program need to accomplish? The answer to this question depends on what is realistic and achievable given your resources and the maturity and comprehensiveness of the program. Clearly defined objectives are critical to program evaluation because they identify the targets by which you will measure your program's progress.

*Objectives* are statements describing the results to be achieved and the manner in which these results will be achieved. Good objectives are specific and measurable. Well-written and clearly defined objectives are important because they—

- Set program priorities.
- Aid in monitoring progress toward achieving goals.
- Set targets for accountability.

A well-written and clearly defined objective is SMART: **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**chievable and **A**mbitious, **R**elevant, and **T**ime bound.

**Specific:** It identifies a specific event or action that will take place.

**Measurable:** It quantifies the amount of change to be achieved.

**Achievable and Ambitious:** It is realistic given available resources and plans for implementation, yet challenging enough to accelerate program efforts.

**Relevant:** It is logical and relates to the program's goals.

**Time-bound:** It specifies a time by which the objective will be achieved.

### Here is an example of a SMART objective:

Our coalition will increase the number of core youth involved in VOICE from 5 youth to 25 youth by June 30, 2010.

- The objective is *specific* because it identifies a defined event: youth involved in VOICE
- The objective is *measurable* because it specifies a baseline value and the quantity of change the intervention is designed to achieve: 5 youth to 25 youth. It would be worthwhile to note whether there is already a data source for the objective.
- The objective is *achievable* because it is realistic given the 9 month time frame and *ambitious* because achieving the goal would be a significant accomplishment.
- The objective is *relevant* because it relates to the increased involvement of youth in community tobacco control.
- The objective is *time-bound* because it provides a specified time by which the objective will be achieved (by June 2006).